

Message Text

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INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

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AMEMBASSY MADRID

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMCONSUL OPORTO

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMCONSUL PONTA DELGADA

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM

USMISSION NATO

DIA WASHDC

USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GER

C O N F I D E N T I A L LISBON 7574

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, PO

SUBJ: NAVY VACANCIES ON REVOLUTIONARY COUNCIL FILLED

SUMMARY: DESPITE OVERALL HOLIDAY LULL IN POLITICAL ACTIVITY, NEGOTIATIONS TO REORGANIZE AZEVEDO GOVERNMENT CONTINUE TO MAKE SLOW PROGRESS. CDR VASCO ALMEIDA E COSTA AND CDR VITOR CRESPO WERE NAMED TO REVOLUTIONARY COUNCIL. MINISTER OF INTERNAL ADMINISTRATION ALMEIDA E COSTA IS A STRONG ANTI-COMMUNIST AND ONE OF MOST FORCEFUL FIGURES IN GOVERNMENT. MINISTER OF COOPERATION CRESPO IS PERSONALLY AND POLITICALLY CLOSE TO FONMIN MELO ANTUNES. END SUMMARY.

1. REVOLUTIONARY COUNCIL: CDR VASCO ALMEIDA E COSTA AND

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CDR VITOR MANUEL CRESPO HAVE BEEN NAMED TO FILL TWO VACANCIES

IN NAVY REPRESENTATION ON REVOLUTIONARY COUNCIL (RC). ALMEIDA E COSTA IS CURRENT MINISTER OF INTERNAL ADMINISTRATION AND CRESPO MINISTER OF COOPERATION. NOMINATIONS BRING RC STRENGTH UP TO NINETEEN MEMBERS. RC WILL MEET DEC 22.

2. GOVERNMENT NEGOTIATIONS CONTINUE: NEGOTIATIONS OVER REORGANIZATION OF AZEVEDO GOVERNMENT WILL RESUME DEC 22. SOCIALIST PARTY (PS) YIELDED TO POPULAR DEMOCRATIC PARTY (PPD) OBJECTIONS, AND ABANDONED ON DEC 19 ITS PROPOSAL THAT TOP POLITICAL APPOINTEES IN MINISTRIES HAVE CONSISTENT POLITICAL VIEW. PS PROPOSED THIS PRINCIPLE AS MEANS TO FORCE OUT COMMUNIST SECRETARY OF STATE FOR AGRARIAN REFORM ANTONIO BICA, BUT PPD VIEWED PROPOSAL AS THREAT TO PPD'S CONTROL OF SEVERAL SUB-CABINET POSITIONS.

3. LEADING MORNING NEWSPAPER PUBLISHES AGAIN: DIARIO DE NOTICIAS, PORTUGAL'S LEADING MORNING DAILY, WHICH HAD BEEN SHUT DOWN BY GOP AFTER NOV 25 COUP ATTEMPT BECAUSE OF ITS BLATANTLY PRO-COMMUNIST POSITION, REAPPEARED DEC 22 UNDER THE EDITORSHIP OF VICTOR CUNHA REGO. CUNHA REGO, A SOCIALIST PARTY MAINSTAY AND STRONG ANTI-COMMUNIST, IS EXPECTED TO KEEP UP THE MODERATE TONE EVIDENT IN THE FIRST ISSUE, BUT HE ANTICIPATES RESISTANCE FROM THE COMMUNISTS STILL REMAINING IN THE ORGANIZATION. DETAILS FOLLOW SEPTEL.

4. COMMENT: ALMEIDA E COSTA, A STRONG ANTI-COMMUNIST, IS AMONG THE MOST FORCEFUL AND MOST CAPABLE FIGURES IN THE AZEVEDO GOVERNMENT. HIS NAVY COLLEAGUES EXPECT HIM TO DEFEND POSITIONS OF "OPERATIONAL" MILITARY IN RC. CRESPO IS PERSONALLY CLOSE TO MELO ANTUNES AND CAN BE EXPECTED TO HEW TO THE FONMIN'S "POLITICAL" LINE.
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